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JEWISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

A FEW years ago Dr. Maybaum published a course of lectures on Jewish Homiletics, which he had delivered in his capacity as Docent of the "Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums" in Berlin. They furnished the present writer with the subject of an Article that appeared in the pages of this REVIEW in October, 1890. From the pulpit to the school-house is an easy step, and Dr. Maybaum has taken it in a recent work on *Jewish Religious Education*¹, which owes its origin to a further series of discourses delivered from his professorial chair. In the former work the needs of the Rabbinical student, viewed as the potential preacher, were kept in view; the present volume appeals to him as the potential teacher. In general interest, however, the later book is manifestly superior. The art and mystery of sermon-writing is obviously a matter that has little concern for any one save those who are already, or hope one day to be, ministers; though there are still laymen, survivals from a bygone age, who think themselves qualified to instruct even the veteran professional in this difficult subject. But religious teaching—that is to say the religious teaching of the young—is something that comes home to all men's bosoms. For a parent there is no subject so interesting as his children, and nothing that bears upon their training can be foreign to his sympathies. Of Jews, in whom parental affection and educational zeal are hereditary qualities, the truth holds good in a special degree. "What sort of religion shall my child be taught,

¹ *Methodik des jüdischen Religionsunterrichtes*, Breslau, 1896.

and who shall teach him?"—this is a question that necessarily forces itself upon the attention of most Jewish parents. And they usually contrive to get some sort of answer, though it is not always an adequate one.

It can hardly fail to be inadequate, seeing that the question itself receives in many cases but scant consideration. Your end-of-the-century Israelite still believes in the importance of religious education, though in too many instances he may have lost the passion for it that has hitherto been the characteristic of his race, and is content to hold it

"Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse."

He still makes inquiry into the credentials of the teacher he engages, though he is perhaps more easily satisfied than he would be if he were investigating the character of his cook. But this *laissez-faire* attitude is almost the exclusive note of the prosperous Jew. To the honour of our working-classes it must be said that their ardour for Jewish education continues unabated. The pecuniary sacrifice that a struggling East-end tailor will make in order to secure what he considers ample religious teaching for his boys, is not the least touching element in a situation that is brimful of pathos. But even his well-to-do coreligionist retains some of the ancestral interest in this vital question. It is the one religious topic that must needs have the attribute of vitality for him. He has children, and he cannot altogether rid himself of the thought that they may have immortal souls after all. Perhaps, too, his minister's favourite contention that character is fate, and religion three-fourths of character, is something more than a pulpit-platitude. Many a man owes his interest in religion to the fact of his being a parent; the earliest cry of his firstborn awakens in his breast echoes that may have slumbered since he himself was a child.

And thus it is that this book of Dr. Maybaum's surpasses in interest his previous volume. The average Jew is more

deeply concerned with the training of a teacher than with the fashioning of a minister, in spite of the deceptive noise and heat that are sometimes evolved in the election of the latter. This, of course, is as it should be. The preacher speaks, it is true, to all ages, but his instruction is unsystematic and indirect; whereas the teacher, though he is engaged in the instruction of the young exclusively, has to perform the most solemn of all tasks—to build up by patient labour the edifice of religious knowledge, and to develop the child's spiritual and moral consciousness. A bad preacher is incapable of doing a hundredth part of the mischief that may be wrought by an incompetent teacher; and though Judaism might survive the closing of all the pulpits, the extinction of the religious teacher would be its death-blow. The world of Jewish life and thought, in Rabbinic phrase, rests on the breath of the school-children.

But mortals, even though they be parents, can use only the materials they have. They cannot make the ideal teacher. They may call him from the vasty deep, but will he come? Assuming that they exercise all necessary circumspection in the choice of a teacher, what are the chances of his turning out satisfactory? The volume before us tends to raise some disquieting reflections on this point. The standard of teaching it lays down is high; but it is so high because of an insistence upon quality as well as quantity. How near does Jewish teaching in England approach to this standard, and for its failure to reach it how much are the shortcomings of the teacher responsible? It is thus that we discern the practical value of these lectures. For Anglo-Jewish teachers, and for the governing bodies of our communal schools and Religion Classes, the book is of absorbing interest. It embodies the views of a thinker who is as practical as he is profound. For the author is no arm-chair educationalist; he has formed his opinions in the school-house. Nor have his ideas, exacting as they may appear to some of us, been nourished by an

antiquated intellectual atmosphere. He has not arrived at them by ignoring new tendencies either in Education or Religion. The very contrary is the case. The author of these lectures is modern to the core. His self-identification with the progressive standpoint is occasionally attended with results which would make an old-fashioned Jew positively shudder. The *Zeitgeist* has found in his breast a congenial home. He accepts the principle of the new Biblical Criticism, and does not seem to feel much the worse for it. But all this only makes him more urgent in his demand for a systematic and an enlightened teaching. If the age is scientific, so too must be the methods by which Judaism is taught. Nay, rationalism is not a synonym for irreligion—Dr. Maybaum is himself a proof that it may be its redoubtable foe. If the bacillus of Agnosticism is in the air, so much the more zealously must Jewish youth be fortified to resist its fatal influence. If the religious life has to be lived under new conditions, religion must be presented under new forms, and imparted by new expedients. I say this here for the information of those of my readers who may imagine that Dr. Maybaum asks much from the teacher, only because he imperfectly appreciates the educational or the religious needs of the present day. Let them be reassured on this point. This Berlin Rabbi is quite up to date in every respect. If there are any defects in his system, they do not spring from ignorance of the conditions of his age. He is content to love the past; he does not live in it. For teachers and school-managers, then, his views are worthy of careful study. No one can read this book without feeling a heightened respect for the importance and the dignity of the teacher's office. But no one can read it, too, without misgiving, without a sense of the disparity between the ideal of education therein set forth and the actual commodity which we English Jews are satisfied to accept.

But this is a book on Methodology, and here am I as unmethodical as possible. Dr. Maybaum takes a long

time getting to the point I have already reached. Faithful to Teutonic practice, he begins at the beginning. Just as he commenced his lectures on Preaching by telling the story of the Jewish pulpit, so his first word about Teaching is historical. But while in his earlier work he carried his narrative back to the Talmudic period, and even to more remote ages, in the present volume he practically confines his survey to modern times. Upon the School-system of the Rabbis he is silent. The mediaeval period he dismisses in almost as summary a fashion as that affected by the famous author who set himself the task of discoursing on Irish snakes. "The growth of Jewish Religious instruction in Germany," he affirms, "dates from the time of Mendelssohn. Religious education, as I understand it, presupposes instruction in other and coordinate branches of knowledge. But this condition was wanting in the educational system of the Jews in the pre-Mendelssohnian age." And then he quotes in support from Güdemann¹:—"The educational ideal of the German Jews was restricted to the knowledge of Hebrew, the Bible and the Talmud. All other subjects of study were forbidden, and for Mendelssohn the task was reserved of removing the ban that had been placed upon them." So that, according to Dr. Maybaum, the history of German-Jewish education in the period previous to the eighteenth century is easily told—there was no Jewish education in those times. But if he is able to deal with the matter in this beautifully brief manner, it is only because he puts his own interpretation upon his terms, and one that will strike some persons as rather arbitrary. He rightly insists upon the necessity of uniting secular teaching with religious training, of blending Jewish instruction with culture; but he is on less firm ground when he denies the name of Jewish education to a system which excluded the secular element. That system may not

¹ *Quellenschriften zur Geschichte des Unterrichts und der Erziehung bei den deutschen Juden*, p. 25.

have supplied a liberal training, judged even from the general mediaeval standpoint, but it was certainly a Jewish education in the sense of being an attempt to imbue the pupil with love and obedience to Judaism, to train the youthful will and conscience in accordance with Jewish ideas.

Having thus disposed of the Middle Ages, our author proceeds to tell the educational story of modern times. The Mendelssohnian influence quickly made itself visible in the altered character of Jewish teaching. In Berlin, Breslau, Seesen, Dessau, Wolfenbüttel, Cassel and Hamburg schools were established by public-spirited men, in which religious instruction was supplemented by secular teaching. At first, the latter was of the most elementary description; it was confined to the "three R's." But by degrees the curriculum was enlarged both in the private schools and also in the communal schools, which were then beginning to spring up. But the admittance of secular subjects into the educational scheme necessarily modified the character of the religious instruction. There was obviously less time for the study of Hebrew, and, as the German Jews were now beginning to exchange the Jewish jargon for the language of their country, less necessity for it. But what the pupil lost in this direction he gained in another. Systematic instruction in the beliefs and practices of Judaism—the subject now specifically known as Religion¹—together with lessons on Jewish History began to dispute for the place previously monopolized by the Talmud, the Rabbinical commentaries on the Bible, and the ritual law-books. Of these two subjects Religion was the first to establish its claim. During the pre-Mendelssohnian period

¹ Forty years ago the term, as part of the nomenclature of education, was far less familiar than it is now. I remember that when, as a very small boy, I was seeking admission into Jews' College School, I was subjected to an examination touching my acquirements by the Principal, the late Dr. Loewe. "What religion have you learnt?" was one of the questions. I could only stammer in my ignorance, "The Jewish Religion."

the necessity of definite instruction in the theory of Judaism had been only vaguely felt. The German Jews lived virtually in a state of isolation. They enjoyed but few opportunities of intercourse with their Gentile neighbours; and, seeing that they had little occasion to act as the apologists of their religion, they felt no impulse to make themselves acquainted with its leading principles. Their own inclination, moreover, led them to restrict their attention to the practical side of Judaism. Thus it happened that among the German Jews text-books for instruction in the Jewish Religion were almost, if not entirely, unknown before the middle of the eighteenth century, though several works of the kind had already been in use for a hundred years among the Sephardi Jews in Holland and Italy. In Germany the children had been left to pick up their religious knowledge as best they might from the reading of the Bible. The advent of the Mendelssohnian era changed all this. It was a time whose very splendour was a snare. The emancipation of the Jews, so favourable to their social and intellectual interests, threatened the stability of their religious convictions. The youthful Israelite found the barriers that had hitherto separated him from his Christian neighbours suddenly thrown down. Unarmed by any adequate knowledge of the sane and inspiring doctrines of Judaism, he was exposed, without protection, to the alluring influences of Christianity. The result is recorded in the history of German-Jewish apostasy during the earlier part of the present century. The crisis called for energetic measures, and one of them was the publication of school-books on religion, the contents of which took the form of catechisms. The first of these works was Dessau's *Grundsätze der jüdischen Religion*, and its date is 1782. Other books quickly followed, and it has been computed that up to 1884 no fewer than 161 of such works had appeared.

Manuals of Bible History came later. Dr. Maybaum accounts for this fact by the circumstance that the Jewish

pupil formerly had to translate so much of the Hebrew Bible that he was able to get a sufficient acquaintance with the Bible story at the same time. Scripture Histories were therefore less urgent necessities than books on Religion. But is not the comparative easiness of Bible history as an educational subject another explanation? The teachers themselves needed a manual of Religion as a *vade mecum*; for instruction in Scripture History they could rely upon their own resources; or, at any rate, they could teach the subject Bible in hand. However this may be, as the quantity of Bible-translation was gradually reduced, the need of independent and systematic instruction in Scripture History became more imperious. Moreover, the importance of giving a moral and religious training to girls, who were never expected to know as much Hebrew as their brothers, was beginning to receive recognition. And thus the text-book of Scripture History was evolved. According to Dr. Maybaum, the *Or Amunah* by Bär Frank (Vienna, 1820), deserves the honour of being regarded as the pioneer work. This book is a digest of the history of the Pentateuch and, as its title indicates, was compiled "for females." A year later there appeared, also in Vienna, the *Sepher Hayashar Ve-haberith*, "a Scripture History for the Young," by one Moses Samuel Neumann. By the year 1884 fifty-seven text-books on this subject had seen the light.

Post-Biblical history was the last to engage the attention of the school-book writers; but then it was also the last to attract the notice of the schoolmasters. As a part of the curriculum, Dr. Maybaum rightly calls it "ein Kind der neuesten Zeit;" its beginnings go back no further than the time of Zunz and Rapoport, and it is only within the last two or three decades that it has firmly established its claim in Germany to admission as an integral constituent of Jewish teaching. "It is only in recent years, in liberal circles more particularly, that a desire has been manifested to popularize the history of

the Jews in the Diaspora as a new means of animating the Israelite with enthusiasm for his ancient vocation, and of arousing in his breast a feeling of pride with which to oppose the disdain of his enemies. By this expedient the assertion is refuted that since the fall of the Jewish State Judaism has ceased to be a factor in the world's culture, and that its ancient mission has been transferred to another religion. Moreover, the principle of religious evolution finds confirmation in the historical fact that not only the external form of religion, but its indwelling thought, has undergone continuous development, and both in the synagogue and in the outer world has conformed to the ideas which the Jews have acquired from their environment. Thus Jewish history, viewed from the educational standpoint, is to be regarded not as the history of a literature merely, but as essentially the history of the Jewish mind; and only in so far as the development of the religious idea is discernible in them should the literary productions of eminent writers furnish an ingredient of religious teaching. And thus it is that the extension of the scope and importance of religious-historical instruction is, like the creation of Jewish Science, one of the chief merits of the Reform movement among the Jews of the present day." The educational value of Jewish history could not be better conceived or expressed; and deeply interesting and significant is the fact that in Germany its value has found the quickest and the most generous recognition among those of our brethren who belong to the advanced school of religious thought. Of England the same thing can scarcely be said, for the sufficient reason that, as an educational subject, Jewish History has hitherto been treated by Conservative and Reform Jews with equal neglect. In so far as its recognition as an element of general culture is concerned, honours are divided. Neither party deserves a preponderating share of the credit that attaches to the establishment of the Jewish Literature Societies, which, comet-like, have from time to time shot

across the communal firmament, or of the blame for allowing them all to disappear ingloriously. The new Jewish Historical Society of England, again, finds proportionate support from both sections of the community. The Society is common ground where Orthodoxy and Reform unite in promoting a cause dear to both alike; or rather it is one of the many valuable opportunities happily enjoyed by English Jews of forgetting that they have any religious differences. Nevertheless, in the schools the teaching of Post-Biblical History has thus far been *une quantité négligeable*.

But I have not yet done with Germany. The first text-books of Post-Biblical History published in that country were Elkan's *Leitfaden beim Unterricht in der Geschichte der Israeliten* (Minden, 1845), and a *History of the Israelites from Alexander to Modern Times*, again by J. H. Dessauer (Erlangen, 1846). Dr. Maybaum enumerates eight manuals on this subject that appeared in Germany between 1845 and 1889.

One subject remains to be considered: Hebrew. In former times the Primer was practically unknown. Hebrew reading was taught from the Prayer Book or the Bible. But Güdemann tells us that as early as 1658 R. Abraham Model of Oettingen invented a method of teaching Hebrew Spelling by means of movable letters—a device with which, as some of my readers will recollect, the late Mr. A. N. Myers familiarized us in this country. Model likewise appears to have anticipated the modern Primer in his *Sepher Maarechet Abraham*, in which a special typographical treatment of the alphabet enabled beginners to readily master the difficulties of Spelling. He also emphasized the desirability of teaching the pupil Grammar *pari passu* with Reading. But the first systematic text-book was Samuel Detmold's *Moreh Derech*, based on the principles of Pestalozzi. It appeared in Vienna in 1800. By the year 1885 seventy-one such books had been published.

Let us now leave Dr. Maybaum for awhile, and trace in

barest outline the early history of Jewish education in England. Systematic religious teaching in the modern Anglo-Jewish community is as old as the community itself¹. The foundation of the first communal Jewish school in the post-Expulsion period synchronizes with the establishment of the first Jewish house of prayer. We find the Rabbi of the Sephardi—the pioneer—congregation devoting several hours daily to the instruction of boys², under the supervision of a Warden especially appointed *ad hoc*. That was soon after the middle of the seventeenth century³. It is not too much to assume, however, that the instruction was restricted in range. A great deal of Hebrew may have been taught, but little Religion, and doubtless less History. The instruction, moreover, was exclusively religious; the time for the community to busy itself with secular teaching was not yet. The children, too, were taught in Spanish, which continued to be the vernacular of the Sephardi Jews in London for several generations. It is certain that Dr. Maybaum would refuse the name of education to these early attempts at instruction. Some seventy years had to elapse before the need was perceived of a change in the crude methods that had satisfied the Jewish settlers under the Protectorate. It was not till 1735 that the Spanish and Portuguese congregation established a "Writing School," where poor children were to be taught the elements of an English education. The sum annually voted for this purpose was just twenty pounds.

Thus the secular element was introduced for the first time into the educational system of the Anglo-Jewish community. But in this respect the Jews of England,

¹ The details in the following two paragraphs are from Picciotto's *Sketches*.

² The girls had to wait till 1730, the date of the establishment of the Villareal School.

³ In a speech delivered at the opening of the new Spanish and Portuguese Schools in Thrawl Street in February last, Mr. Arthur Lindo gave the date of the foundation of the original schools as 1664, i.e. two years after the establishment of the first synagogue.

strangers and sojourners though they were in the land, beat their brethren in Germany by half-a-century. The introduction of secular teaching coincided with an attempt to improve the religious instruction. The effort was not made too soon. In the three divisions of the Sephardi schools the subjects of instruction ranged from the Hebrew Alphabet to the translation of *Rashi*, with translation of the Prayer Book and of the Bible and the rudiments of Grammar as intermediate stages. Nothing else appears to have been taught—neither Post-Biblical History nor Systematic Religion, though no doubt the pupil assimilated certain facts of Scripture history while he was learning to translate the sacred text. The Sephardim, as we have seen, were not satisfied with the existing state of things, but their dissatisfaction was kindled less by the meagreness of the educational fare than by the insufficiency of the system under which it was supplied. Their reformatory endeavours, however, led to nothing. Chacham Nieto, who died in 1773, condemned the schools in unmeasured language. The boys, he declared, were “steeped in crass ignorance.” The masters attended irregularly, and the scholars bettered their instruction. Discipline was conspicuous by its absence, as were both teachers and pupils. In 1779 a committee of inquiry reported “that of the total number of sixty-four pupils scarcely one-eighth could even read Hebrew after an instruction of seven or eight years, and nearly all were unacquainted with the daily prayers.” The cost of this huge failure was £600 a year, or a trifle under ten pounds per scholar. The drastic changes that resulted from the inquiry possibly did something to ensure the Sephardi Schools the greater efficiency they subsequently attained; but the rapid improvement in the intellectual condition of the Anglo-Jewish community, which had now set in, no doubt did more. The first years of the century found the Ashkenazi Jews in London successfully contending with their Sephardi brethren for the communal primacy. They had rapidly increased in numbers and intelligence, and

a new-born educational ardour was the firstfruits of their improved condition. In 1818 the Free School in Bell Lane was opened, and in mere size alone overtopped at a bound the kindred Sephardi institution with its century-and-a-half of life.

It is right, however, to point out that the educational zeal of the German Jews was a plant of very slow growth. It is a commonplace that in Jewish communities the school is ever the contemporary, if not the predecessor, of the house of prayer. The Ashkenazim in England furnished the exception that proves the rule. In this respect their history certainly compares unfavourably with that of their Portuguese brethren. The latter made the provision of religious teaching a congregational duty from the outset; with the former it was the last to be admitted into the category of communal obligations. By about the middle of the last century the Germans had three synagogues, a Chief Rabbi, a cemetery, a charitable society (the *Chebrath Hachnasath Berith*), but no organized religious instruction. The present century dawned without seeing the deficiency repaired. The synagogues wrangled among themselves about matters of more or less trifling moment, but the great question of ensuring the future of English Judaism by engaging for the religion the affection and loyalty of the young was not considered, or, if considered, was thrust aside as of small importance. Poor boys in those days were left to the training of the streets; "they were educated in the sale of oranges and lemons, cedar pencils and sponges in stony-hearted London¹." What little instruction they received consisted of "some sort of parrot-Hebrew drummed into them anyhow" by foreign Melamedim². The establishment of the Talmud Torah school about the year 1770 was the only organized attempt to improve matters. But it was at best only a feeble and meagre attempt. The school was intended to give religious

¹ *Jewish Chronicle* for July 16, 1869.

² *Ibid.*

instruction to exactly twenty-one boys. Neither the number nor the sex of the pupils ever varied. But about twenty years after the foundation of the school it was decided to extend the course of instruction by adding secular subjects—of course the usual “three R’s.” In Hebrew, however, the scholars were taken pretty far. Thus at the consecration of the new buildings of the Free School by the Rev. Dr. Hirschell in 1822 the boys of the Talmud Torah, after following the Chief Rabbi and their master in circuit round the school, recited a portion of the Mishnah¹.

The teaching of a score of boys thus represented the entire provision made by the German Jews for the religious education of the poor down to the middle of the first decade of this century. In 1807 the Jews’ Hospital was opened, chiefly owing to the energy and educational zeal of Abraham Goldsmid. But this institution was not a day-school, and it accommodated only eighteen children (ten boys and eight girls), so that it was obviously unfitted to solve the great problem which, in spite of the comparative indifference to education that generally prevailed in this country, was beginning to press upon the Anglo-Jewish community with increased force. The solution was found in the establishment, largely at the instance of the Rev. Dr. Hirschell, of the Free School in Spitalfields, hastened, as that event doubtless was, by the recent strictures of Mr. Patrick Colquhoun, on the condition of the Jewish poor².

Even the great School was initiated in timid fashion. For its beginnings we are told to go back to a couple of rooms, “bare-walled and rough³.” It is certain that

¹ The programme of the proceedings lies before me. The earliest minute-book of the Talmud Torah that I have seen dates from February, 1791. Dr. Joseph Hart Myers was then President, and among the other managers of the School were L. B. Cohen; Moses Hart; Abraham, Asher, and George Goldsmid; E. J. Keyser; Naphtali Hart Myers; Alexander Phillips; Michael Samson, and Lyon de Symons.

² As to Colquhoun see Picciotto, p. 257 seq.

³ *Jewish Chronicle*, July 30, 1868. The Free School may be said to have

a modest house in Ebenezer Square, Spitalfields, was the immediate precursor of the building opened in Bell Lane in 1818. Even in that building the curriculum was very limited; it did not go beyond the reading and writing of Hebrew and English and the rudiments of arithmetic, and the 270 boys were taught by one master. When two years later the school was enlarged for the reception of 600 boys and 300 girls, the scheme of instruction does not appear to have been materially widened¹.

The marvellous growth and achievements of the School in more recent times are familiar matters, and need not here be dwelt upon. The establishment of other important schools, not only in London², but in the larger provincial

issued out of the Talmud Torah School, which, at first, carried on as a separate establishment under the same roof as the Free School, was subsequently incorporated with it.

¹ The above particulars are taken from the annual Reports of the School for 1835 and 1861. The subjoined extract from the former Report may be interesting:—"The following is the present state of the Boys' School, the major part of which is composed of a considerable number of scholars scarcely more than six years of age. (The total number of pupils in the boys' department at that time was 310.) Hebrew—86 translating the prayers and the Bible; 61 reading the prayers; 76 reading easy lessons; and the remainder in the lower classes. English—130 read the Bible and Mrs. Trimmer's Selections; 91 are in lessons; and the remainder in the lower classes. Arithmetic—20 in reduction and division; 30 in multiplication and subtraction; and 100 in addition and the tables. The Girls' School is attended by 122 scholars, 25 of whom read the Bible, and 35 read Mrs. Trimmer's Selections, the remainder being in the lower classes; 26 translate, and 40 read the Hebrew Prayer-Book, and the rest are rapidly advancing; and 30 are pretty forward in the first four rules of arithmetic. The needlework proceeds with astonishing rapidity. . . . The great use made of the female children among the poor in necessary domestic employment keeps this portion of the establishment thinly attended; on which account, as well as for many other reasons, an Infant School would prove of great importance."

² The earliest Jewish School in London, apart from the Free School in Spitalfields, is the Westminster Jews' Free School. The beginnings of this school seem to be known to no man. I have consulted the "oldest inhabitant" on this point, but without getting any definite information. According to the School Reports the institution was founded as far back as 1811; but it would appear that in those early days it was nothing

towns, followed in quick succession. But the voluntary school movement in the Anglo-Jewish community was not destined to enjoy indefinite expansion. It reached its culminating point in 1876, when the Jewish Association for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge, now the Jewish Religious Education Board, established its first group of classes for Hebrew and Religion at the Board School in Old Castle Street, Whitechapel. This new departure, which was destined to exert an important influence upon the methods and character of the religious teaching of the community, was among the firstfruits of the Education Act of 1870. By that measure the provision of elementary education was recognized as a duty of the State; and the Jewish poor, despite their inherited prejudice in favour of sectarian teaching, were not slow to avail themselves of the educational facilities thus offered to them as citizens. In this step they were encouraged by the attitude of a section of their more prosperous brethren, who considered themselves absolved by the payment of the School Board rate from the duty of supporting denominational schools, or at least from the obligation of promoting the establishment of new ones. Moreover, the increase in the Jewish poor during the last fifteen years has been too rapid to admit of sufficient provision being made, by an enlargement or multiplication of the communal schools, for the new educational needs thus created. Thus the movement initiated by the Jewish Education Board has progressed by leaps and bounds. The group of classes established at Castle Street has since

better than a Talmud Torah, which was carried on at some unknown *locale* in the West End (Drury Lane according to one informant). The precise date when the establishment blossomed into a complete school, with secular as well as religious teaching, cannot be ascertained with precision. The Girls' School was not established till 1846, and for some time was carried on as a separate institution. The earliest extant minute-book of the Schools does not go back further than that year—a glaring instance of that indifference to the preservation of their records, which unfortunately characterized the managers of the communal institutions in former days.

multiplied into nine groups attached to various East-end Board Schools, and the total number of scholars has increased from 400 to nearly 6,000. For good or evil it seems to be fated that no new denominational school will be established in the Anglo-Jewish community. Even the conservative Sephardi congregation have so far yielded to the influence and exigencies of the times as to limit the teaching in their Boys' School to religious subjects, and now trust to a local Board School for the secular instruction of the scholars.

The Elementary School and the Board School Classes, however, do not represent the entire religious educational apparatus of the community. Religious teaching is not the exclusive need of any class. At one time it was quite the fashion for the more prosperous Jews to send their children—their boys more particularly—to Jewish Boarding Schools. Some of these "Academies" have played no insignificant part in the training of distinguished English Jews past and present. They acquired a reputation which has outlived them. Garcia's school at Camberwell, Hurwitz's (afterwards Neumegen's) school at Highgate, Solomon's at Edmonton, Mrs. Belisario's in St. John's Street Road, were at once the earliest and the most famous of these establishments. Other schools, newly come up, have taken their place, but their scholars are chiefly recruited from the lower middle class, the wealthy Jews evincing an increased predilection for an arrangement which enables them to give their boys a Public School training combined with a certain measure of religious instruction. Jewish houses at Clifton and Cheltenham, and a Jewish visiting tutor at Harrow, are quite *fin de siècle* phenomena.

What effect these recent developments will exert upon the future of English Judaism, time alone can show. The present educational outlook is not reassuring. It is more than doubtful whether what advertisers are fond of styling the *élite* of the community maintain their old zeal for

religious education. Religious studies are being slowly pushed to the wall by the ever-growing demands of a system which has the Public School and Competitive Examinations for its chief features. The evil has begun to affect religious instruction pure and simple. As to the teaching of Hebrew, that has already been frankly expelled from the category of necessary studies in certain circles. On the other hand, it is questionable whether the state of Jewish education among the humbler classes is altogether satisfactory. The arrest of the Voluntary School movement, to which allusion has just been made, has not been free from drawbacks. The Board School Classes merely supplement the Voluntary Schools; they cannot, as their managers themselves admit, replace them. The Jewish Education Board does wonders with resources whose inadequacy is a standing monument to the communal niggardliness; but the Board would be the first to confess how meagre is the instruction it is able to impart, especially in the matter of Hebrew. A comparison of the results respectively attained in the teaching of this subject by the Board School Classes and by an organization like the Talmud Torah in Great Garden Street, brings this fact out only too clearly. What seems to be needed is an arrangement which would ensure to boys, at any rate, under the supervision of the Board, more thorough instruction in Hebrew on a modified Talmud Torah system, without interfering with the quality of the religious and ethical instruction now being given by the Board. I am not blind to the defects of the Talmud Torah system. Even the Great Garden Street School, which, after all, is only a glorified *Cheder*, has its obvious limitations. The system is more or less mechanical, and the most sacred things are taught as a sort of drill. Perhaps, too, the charge brought against all such schools, that they involve over-pressure, may have some truth in it; though I believe it to be exaggerated. But the great point is that the Talmud Torah system has the confidence of the parents,

and that, in consequence, the children attend, and, what is more, learn¹.

Nor has religious teaching among the lower middle class been proof against change. Time was when the children of parents in comfortable circumstances, if they were not sent to a Jewish boarding-school, received their religious instruction from a teacher at home. But the private teacher is in less request than he formerly was. He has found, I suspect, a formidable rival in that expedient, at once new and old,—the Congregational Religion Class². Religion Classes are now attached to nearly every London Synagogue that has any pretensions to religious vitality. In effect they are a return to the ancient arrangement which identified the religious school with the synagogue³.

Following Dr. Maybaum's method of procedure, let us

¹ The Great Garden Street Talmud Torah gives instruction to 600 boys in eleven classes; many children are waiting for admission. The subjects range from Talmud to *Aleph Beth*. The expenditure for 1896 was £923. The children's pence brought in £388, the subscriptions and donations £597. The School is managed by a local Committee. There is an inferior Talmud Torah of about the same size in Brick Lane.

² As a matter of communal history I deem it right to state, under correction, that the first Congregational Religion Class, i.e. a Religion Class primarily intended for the children of a particular congregation, and held under its auspices, was that established by my wife at the North London Synagogue in 1873. The first Sabbath Classes, unconnected with a synagogue, were those established and conducted at the Free School in the "forties" by Mrs. Barnett, the first head-mistress of the school. At a later date her daughter, Mrs. Harris, held similar Classes at 14 Devonshire Square (her daughter, Miss Emily Harris, still conducts a Sabbath Class at Hanway Street Schools). The Revs. A. L. Green and B. H. Ascher used to deliver occasional discourses at the meetings in Devonshire Square. Still later Classes were held at the Infant School and at the Borough Synagogue in Prospect Place, Southwark. In the West End a Sabbath School was established by the Countess d'Avigdor and the Rev. Dr. Löwy more than thirty years ago. It was held at various places, the Birkbeck Institute being the first of them.

³ In the smaller provincial congregations, which are too poor to pay for the luxury of special Jewish schools, what is virtually the primitive system still survives. The children attend an unsectarian school, and then resort, at the synagogue or elsewhere, to the congregational teacher, usually the minister, for religious instruction.

now inquire what has been done by English Jews in the matter of providing suitable school-books. An analysis of Messrs. Jacobs and Wolf's Bibliography¹ will show that by 1888 there had appeared in this country twenty-one text-books on Hebrew (Spelling-books and Grammars); twenty-three on Religion, ten on Bible History, and only four on Post-Biblical history, of which one (Mrs. H. Lucas's edition of Dr. Cassel's *Leitfaden*) is a translation. Judged by quantity alone, the output is not discreditable. The quality is, as a rule, less satisfactory. The earliest work on Hebrew mentioned in the list is a Grammar by one Jehudah Stennett, published as far back as 1685. But we do not meet with a book on Religion until 1815², nor with a Scripture history until 1839³. Post-Biblical histories, as in Germany, are a bad last. The earliest seems to have been the Rev. A. P. Mendes's *Post-Biblical History of the Jews*, which was published in 1873. When to the translation of Cassel, already mentioned, Lady Magnus' two works are added, the meagre list is, I think, complete. The number of Anglo-Jewish text-books has slightly increased since 1888⁴; but it will bear further extension. A properly graduated Hebrew Primer and an Elementary Grammar, methodically arranged, are crying wants⁵.

But it is time we returned to the book under review. From the history of Jewish Education in Germany, Dr. Maybaum passes to Education viewed from the

¹ Publications of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition, No. 3, 1888.

² *Elements of Truth for the Use of Jewish Youth of Both Sexes*, by S. J. Cohen.

³ *The Guide of the Hebrew Student*, containing an epitome of Sacred History, by Hermann Hedwig Bernard, formerly Howitz.

⁴ Notably by the publication of Miss E. M. Harris's *Narrative of the Holy Bible*, Dr. Friedländer's two books on Religion, and Mr. Claude Montefiore's *Bible for Home Reading*, though the author would perhaps disclaim the appellation of text-book for the last-named work. As I am on disputed ground I may also mention the *Mehayil El Hayil*, a series of lessons on Religion by various writers.

⁵ Since the above was written the first part of the Rev. Michael Adler's Grammar has appeared, so that there is an excellent prospect of one of these needs being supplied.

pedagogic standpoint. This is his principal theme, and it naturally divides itself into two parts: matter and method, and his treatment of both branches of his subject is at once brilliant and comprehensive. He puts in an eloquent plea for the teaching of Bible history. The moral law, he points out, is universal law; and, apart from the religious truths interwoven in the Sacred Narrative, the ethical spirit which pervades it makes it "a copious well-spring of ethical-religious instruction, at which the young cannot be made to drink too often or too deeply or too soon." But, judged even from the school-master's point of view, the Bible becomes a peculiarly valuable medium for the inculcation of the higher truth. The Bible is a narrative, and experience shows that an axiom, whether religious or moral, sinks with greater certainty into the child's consciousness when it is associated with an event. He sees, so to speak, the consequences of right and wrong-doing in action, and thus he not only learns doctrine, but acquires the practical wisdom which consists in the application of doctrine to life. "Therefore," says Dr. Maybaum, "the Bible history is the most important subject of religious education." We all remember how firmly even Professor Huxley held this view¹. He considered that its vivid story made the Bible an ethical text-book for young children, which no other could replace.

For Jews, of course, the Bible has a unique educational value. It is the history of their religion, in its earlier phases at any rate—the story of a spiritual development extending from primitive times to the age of the Sinaitic covenant, which, according to Dr. Maybaum's theory, marks the culminating point in the evolution of the religious idea. What remains of the Bible-narrative is undoubtedly a record of growth, but of the growth of the religious *consciousness* in Israel—the growth of the people's power of assimilating the great principles of its

¹ See his article on "The School Boards," in the volume on "Science and Education."

creed, and of realizing the grandeur of its mission. To trace this spiritual development step by step is the business of the teacher. Nor will he omit to draw out the truths imbedded in the narrative. Thus he will use the life of Joseph to illustrate the working of Divine Providence in human destiny. But here certain difficulties present themselves which the teacher must boldly face. He must be prepared to pass over without hesitation those passages which, for obvious reasons, are unsuitable as a basis for the instruction of children. On the other hand, the desire to preserve the continuity of the narrative must not be thwarted even by a regard for modern Biblical criticism. "Certain Scriptural personages have come in recent times to acquire a mythical character; certain Biblical institutions, hitherto believed to be ancient, are now held to be of comparatively late origin; prayers and other utterances are declared to be later than the men in whose mouths they are placed. Considerations such as these must be no stumbling-block to the teacher. The composition of Holy Writ, no matter the age in which it took place, was manifestly undertaken for religious ends; and those ends have been hitherto attained by the Bible, in its traditional shape, so satisfactorily that for the purposes of religious instruction we have every reason to keep its story unaltered." In other words, Dr. Maybaum, while not denying the general truth of the Critical Theory, would seem to rule it out of court in the schoolroom. I word the sentence cautiously because later on, as we shall see, he boldly declares himself in favour of introducing the results of Biblical Criticism into the teaching of the more advanced classes.

From Biblical to Post-Biblical History is only a step. If the former tells how the Jewish people has gradually risen to a complete perception of its mission, the latter traces the progress of the mission towards actual fulfilment. Wandering Israel is now engaged in founding the Kingdom of God among the various nations. The new conditions

thus created give rise to fresh religious developments within the domain of Judaism. These developments, however, are not regarded by the Israelite as really new. He knows how to connect them organically with the old religion; he conceives of an Oral Law imparted simultaneously with the Written Word. Dr. Maybaum's remarks on this point possess so much intrinsic importance, and throw so much light upon his religious position, that I may be permitted to give his *ipsissima verba*. "One hardly knows," he says, "whether to style this notion of an Oral Law self-deception or a sound intuition, seeing that it is both the one and the other, according to the point of view from which it is regarded. For, as a matter of fact, an Oral Law, if not in the sense of the ancients, has been given in every age, nay, a law always older than the corresponding written code, which is only popular custom crystallized in statutes And thus it is that Jewish history shows us that the law is not immutable, but always in the making (*ein stets Werdendes*). Each epoch places a term upon the religious development of its predecessor, and thus transforms the Oral into a Written Law." And this process is still going on, for it is endless. Here Dr. Maybaum's *Anschaung* stands revealed. He is one of the new school of Jewish theologians, of whom Krochmal and Zunz were the forerunners, and which looks to the religious developments not of one age, but of every age, for the constituents of Judaism. Mr. Schechter has familiarized English readers with the idea in the remarkable Introduction with which he has prefaced his *Studies in Judaism*.

Instruction in Jewish history is, then, to be, above all, instruction in the history of Judaism and of Jewish religious life. Everything calculated to subserve this purpose may be used—the conflict of religious parties in Jewry, the religious labours of the Talmudic doctors, the Rabbinical Codices, the religious-philosophical works, the ethical treatises, the growth of the Liturgy. All other

matters—purely political movements, books whose interest is exclusively literary and the like—must be passed by. As a rule, our author contends, the teacher dwells at excessive length upon the Spanish-Jewish era, and is satisfied to dismiss in a few inadequate words the Talmudic age and, more especially, the period subsequent to Mendelssohn. The procedure should be exactly the reverse.—An unfamiliar view certainly, as notable as it is novel. But is it sound?

At least equally debatable are some of Dr. Maybaum's ideas about the teaching of Hebrew. He thinks that the sole justification for teaching Hebrew to Jewish children is the fact that Hebrew is the language of the Synagogue-service. He ignores the claim which Hebrew possesses upon the reverence of every Israelite as the language of his forefathers and of his literature. He overlooks, moreover, the religious inspiration which a Jewish child may draw from the consciousness of possessing it. If the time should ever come—and Dr. Maybaum does not seem to think the contingency impossible—when Hebrew is expelled from the Synagogue, its disappearance from the School-house would, if his theory is tenable, be a logical and justifiable consequence. It is curious, in this connexion, to find so distinguished an educational authority as the Head Master of Harrow pleading for Hebrew as a subject of instruction in Public Schools. "Nor can I help regretting," he once wrote, "that in Public Schools boys are so seldom permitted or encouraged to acquire the elements of Hebrew. No doubt it would be a mistake to enforce Hebrew on most boys; but considering its special interest and claim, I cannot help thinking that there should be somebody in a Christian school—and why not the Headmaster, as he is generally in Holy Orders?—who is capable of imparting an elementary knowledge of the earliest and the most sacred of the Biblical tongues¹." The contrast between

¹ *Thirteen Essays on Education*, p. 65.

these conflicting opinions of the Jewish Rabbi and the Christian divine is sufficiently striking¹.

Instruction in the translation, not only of the Prayer Book, but even of the Bible must, in our author's opinion, be regulated with reference to his theory. Only those parts of the Sacred Text—i.e. the Pentateuch, practically—need be translated in the schools, which are read in the course of public worship—an expression of opinion which recalls the *Cheder*, with its emphasis on mere *davonen* and its general subordination of the teaching to the exigencies of prayer, public and private. But here, as elsewhere, Dr. Maybaum shows himself to be a curious amalgam of old and new ideas. The Haphtorah, he is careful to add, need not be included in the scheme of Hebrew Translation, seeing that in many congregations in Germany the Prophets are now recited in the vernacular—a piece of information which is not without practical interest for us English Jews.

The best passages in this part of the book are those dealing with the second division of the *Lehrstoff*: Religion. A brief survey of the history of Jewish dogma concludes with the assertion that the theological contents of Judaism cannot be rigorously defined. Here, we are warned, a study of the past is of no service; it simply confuses. "It is the special task of each age *to sift and to delimitate its theology anew*." The italics are Dr. Maybaum's. Thus the principle of growth, which he applies to the Ritual Law, he now extends to the Creed. Each generation makes its Judaism, in its twofold aspect of practice and belief. Schemes of faith, like that of Maimonides, for example, our author considers—in this respect following R. Saul Berlin, whom he quotes from Mr. Schechter's *Studies*—as merely means of emphasizing doctrines specially impugned at the moment. They have no necessary binding force. "In no case is

¹ Similarly Dr. Biber, the biographer of Pestalozzi, recommends Hebrew on pedagogic grounds as the first foreign language that children should learn. See his *Henry Pestalozzi*, p. 421. Matthew Arnold's admiration for Hebrew as an educational subject is well-known.

everlasting salvation dependent upon their reception or rejection. . . . A religion that asserts as an unquestionable principle that the righteous of all nations have a share in eternal bliss cannot possibly make everlasting felicity, in the case of its own followers, conditional on their subscription to any dogma." But then this very logical deduction comes into collision with that awkward passage in the Mishnah (Synhed. 10, 1), with its category of persons who have no portion in the life to come, among them being those that deny the dogma of Revelation and the Scriptural origin of the Messianic idea. Here we have an apt illustration of the danger of generalizing from isolated passages from the Talmud, and of the difficulty that confronts Rabbis of Dr. Maybaum's stamp, who unite with a liberal theology a recognition of the letter of the Talmud as a living authority. But it must not be supposed that Dr. Maybaum altogether excludes the teaching of a Creed from his educational plan. On the contrary, he suggests four leading ideas as texts upon which to found the instruction in Religion. Teachers may be glad to have a list of them. They are 1. God—His Unity, Holiness and Perfection. 2. Man—created in the Divine image, immortal, free. 3. The relations between God and Man—subdivided thus: (*a*) God, the Creator and Father, his rule as manifested in nature and history, in natural law and in the moral law; his revelation at Sinai; and his scheme of salvation for Israel and mankind; (*b*) Man as the child of God; sin and atonement; the effort after holiness and the means of attaining it (under this head comes the ceremonial law); Israel, the servant of God, his mission. 4. The relations of men to each other—brotherliness, mutual love and rectitude, the promotion of the public weal, and the acceleration of the Messianic era of concord and peace.

Such are the broad outlines of Dr. Maybaum's scheme; how he fills it in we shall see presently. But it belongs to this part of the subject to mention that he counsels the

teacher, when dealing with the doctrine of Immortality, to represent the "so-called incongruities of human life" as simply a test of men's obedience, and to avoid degrading the future world by speaking of it as a compensation. He characterizes as "still more preposterous" the argument which would adduce the disparity between deserts and destiny as a proof of the truth of Immortality, an argument which, he contends, is simply an impeachment of the Divine action in this life. He holds that, according to the view he thus denounces, "God's providence, at fault here, is to have an opportunity of repairing its mistakes hereafter"—again a somewhat unconventional idea, which is at least worthy of notice. As to the doctrine of the Resurrection of the body, Dr. Maybaum does not mince matters. He frankly strikes it out of his plan. The doctrine, he contends, rests on false exegesis, the offspring of non-Jewish influences. For ages it overshadowed the doctrine of Immortality. But in these days the teacher must as resolutely ignore the one as he must emphasize the other. Nor should he have anything to say to such ideas as a personal Messiah, or the Return to Palestine, or the Re-establishment of the Jewish State. All these conceptions, we are told, are alien to the Messianic belief, and were only engrafted upon it in response to the shifting hopes of successive ages. And since, moreover, in these days they have already faded out of the religious consciousness of the Western Jews, the Messianic idea must be taught in its pristine purity, as foreshadowing the advent of a time when Israel, the "priest of humanity," will have established, in union with the nations, the universal worship of the One and only God and the reign of love and righteousness upon earth. This is all very interesting, not only as pedagogic counsel, but as a confession of faith on the part of one of the most influential Rabbis in Germany, and one, moreover, who is not a Reformer, in the sense in which the German Jews understand the term. If Dr. Maybaum does not place himself at the standpoint

of his *confrère* Dr. Hildesheimer, the protagonist of German orthodoxy to-day, he is perhaps as far removed from the *Richtung* of Holdheim's *Schul'*, which typifies the opposite view. He represents the *juste milieu* between these two extremes; nay, he represents the Berlin Jewish community. That the development of Judaism, that is to say of official Judaism, has made greater strides in the German capital than in London will become clear to any one who asks himself how many of Dr. Adler's ministers could be found holding, or at any rate avowing, opinions like those expressed in the book before us. I draw attention to this point as a curiosity, not in a polemical spirit.

We pass in the next place from the contents to the methods of religious instruction. This part of the subject is of surpassing interest to teachers. I am glad to find our author pitilessly condemning the religious Catechism. The Catechism, he maintains, is an importation from Christianity. But there are sounder reasons for putting it on the Jewish *index*. Religion is an affair of the heart and the will, and no stereotyped system of questions and answers can make any effective appeal to either. The achievement transcends the powers, indeed, of any mere text-book, unaided by the earnestness, the high character, the personal magnetism of the teacher himself. But of all text-books the least suited to religious instruction is the Catechism, with its dry, formal statements, which kill all spontaneity and enthusiasm in the teacher almost as surely as in the pupil. Catechisms, some one has well said, are written not for children, but for masters who are dunces, and, it might have been added, for masters who are lazy.

Dr. Maybaum has something interesting to say about the mode of teaching Scripture History to young beginners. He would have the Bible taught to them exactly as it is, with all its miracles and anthropomorphisms. Nothing is to be explained away; for the Bible-methods, he holds, are exactly suited to the child, for whom the abstract does not exist. In the case of the more advanced classes, however,

the plan must be modified. Here the intellect is beginning to dispute the mastery with the emotions. Accordingly, the miracles are to be represented in their true light as "myths and legends of the old Israelitish folk-poetry." "But," we are reminded, "even here the naïve form of the narrative must not be needlessly sacrificed. The old legendary dress must be preserved, and only when necessary must the difference between the instructive idea and its external garb be indicated. By thus preserving the simplicity of the narrative a double advantage is gained; the ethical-religious contents of the story impress themselves more deeply upon the consciousness of the pupil, and he comes to perceive and to value its poetic beauty." On the other hand Judaism suffers no injury from a recognition of the mythical element in the Bible. In this respect it has the advantage over Christianity, of which the theological fabric collapses as soon as its miraculous basis is removed. For Jews, on the contrary, "the significance of Israel lies wholly and solely in the saving doctrine of Scripture, which can therefore dispense with miracles, and is all-sufficient in itself." These again are outspoken opinions on the lips of a Rabbi and of one, moreover, who is engaged in the solemn task of giving counsel to teachers. How many teachers in England, or indeed in Germany, will have the courage to accept the advice thus proffered them? Nevertheless the teacher is warned against the rationalistic view which attempts to explain the miracles of the Bible as natural occurrences. Such a method is "a veritable sin against the form as well as the spirit of the Scriptural narrative." Our author will have no half-measures. Of two things one, he says; we must either teach the Bible in the old orthodox fashion, which represents the miracles as historical events, or we must admit that, like all other nations of antiquity, Israel has his myths and legends, and that the Bible is the depository of them. But here, I fancy, the teacher would have been better pleased if his mentor had been a little

more explicit. What are the limits of the mythical in the Bible? At what point may the teacher tell his pupils that they are at length on the *terra firma* of history? Is it at Noah or Abraham or Moses? On this profoundly interesting point Dr. Maybaum is silent. He does not deem detail superfluous when he is treating of other branches of his theme. Why is he content to be vague here? He may conceivably reply that history and legend are inextricably blended in the Bible, and that it is impossible to say where one begins and the other ends. Still the teacher would have been grateful for a little more explicitness. Is the Deluge a fact, or was Huxley right? Did Abraham ever exist, or is he, as some writers maintain, but the personification of a great ethnical movement?

Dr. Maybaum is less disappointing, perhaps, in his remarks about the conflict between the Bible and Science. He counsels the teacher to impress his pupils with the truth that the Bible is an authority on religion and morals, not a scientific manual. Artificial reconciliations between the words of Scripture and scientific doctrine must be eschewed. As to the moral difficulties presented by the Bible story, they must either be evaded by passing over the passages that raise them, or if regard for the continuity of the narrative makes this impossible, they must be turned by generalizations. Thus the temptation of Joseph will be described by saying that Potiphar's wife tried to persuade Joseph to commit a sin. But here again I can imagine the teacher asking for more light. "Suppose," he will say, "some inquiring pupil follows up the communication of the fact by asking 'What sin?'" There are cognate difficulties which our author does not even notice. How, for example, are those parts of the Bible to be dealt with which seem to impugn the Divine justice and mercy? How is the command to exterminate the Canaanites to be reconciled with the goodness of the Supreme? These difficulties, of course, can be met; but Dr. Maybaum does not tell us how. He will doubtless answer that he cannot

prescribe for every case; something, he will urge, must be left to the teacher. "I do not speak," he may plead,

"to that dull elf,
Who cannot image to himself."

But the suggested difficulties illustrate the fact that it is not all plain sailing even when the teacher has taken leave of his guide with the intention of following his counsels. And perhaps it is well that he should realize the fact. No lectures, however wise and scholarly, nor text-books, however comprehensive and well arranged, can make the teacher independent of himself. Self-reliance he needs always, but most of all when he is engaged in the task of religious instruction.

I have spoken of text-books. For Bible history these, as we are very properly reminded, are to be used by the pupil at home, rather than in Class. As for the teacher, he must learn to do without them. "*Viva voce* teaching must be the rule even in the highest Classes." No one will gainsay this statement. If the interest of the pupils is to be aroused and maintained, the teacher must fling away his Scripture Histories and "Bible Stories," and trust to his own words to depict the scene or the character, and to enforce its lessons. If he lacks the inspiration or the simple eloquence which the task demands, he is not a competent teacher—of the Bible at any rate.

About Hebrew Dr. Maybaum has less to say, though what he does say is very useful. I miss some hints about the teaching of the alphabet. I have found it a useful plan to teach only the sound of the letters to beginners, leaving the pupil to learn the names at a later stage. This is a great saving of time, and it ensures the more attractive stage of translation being reached more quickly. Further, I always make a point of suggesting to teachers the advisability of dictating the Translation in such a way that the pupil can readily fit the English to the corresponding word in the original. This is done either by

assigning a separate line to the English equivalent of each Hebrew word, or by enclosing it within perpendicular strokes. Dr. Maybaum does not notice such expedients, but he makes the very sensible suggestion that Translation should be taken up as early as possible, and that when once a word has been translated, the pupil should never read it without giving its meaning. For the rest, his ideas are strongly, perhaps too strongly, coloured by his paramount aim, that of enabling the pupil to follow the Synagogue-service as soon as possible. Accordingly he relegates Translation of the Pentateuch, though not without an apology, to a comparatively late stage, and allows the Prayer Book to take its place; and he is in favour of the pupil committing to memory long passages of the prayers, not only the *Shemang*, for example, but the ברכות הנהנין, the daily *Amidah*, אַתָּה בָּחַרְתָּנוּ, &c., though they may be in total ignorance of their meaning. This is quite *à la Cheder*. More unexceptionable is his thesis that, in the case of beginners, Hebrew Grammar should not be treated as a separate subject, but taught in close connexion with Translation.

There remains, finally, Systematic Religion. This is to be reserved for the most advanced scholars. In the lower forms Religion will be taught as an ingredient of Bible, History and Translation, and therefore unsystematically. An appropriate opportunity for the systematic teaching of Religion is afforded by the preparation for the Confirmation-rite. What is to be the content of this instruction? The subject-matter is usually divided into two sections: Beliefs and Duties. (*Glaubenslehre* and *Pflichtenlehre*.) Dr. Maybaum, however, scents danger in this sharp demarcation of doctrine from duty. It imparts, he thinks, a dogmatic flavour to the religion; and the theology, moreover, has to be justified on philosophical grounds. He shudders at the thought of the "ontological, cosmological, and teleological" proofs usually adduced for the truth of the Divine Existence. They make Religion the dependent of Philo-

sophy, and furthermore they offend against pedagogic canons, seeing that the Religion-school is not the proper place for such explanations. All this strikes me as being somewhat arbitrary and unreal. It is very clear that if you are to teach Religion at all, you must have dogma, and as soon as you begin to teach Religion as a science you must justify your dogma. Dr. Maybaum has his own scheme, as we have seen. But it seems to me open to the objections he himself formulates. According to his plan the pupil is to be told that God exists, that he is one, holy and perfect. These are as truly dogmas as the Incarnation; but unlike the Incarnation, they are susceptible of verification, and verified they must be. It needs a very powerful microscope indeed to discern any real difference between Dr. Maybaum's list of subjects and those he condemns. On the other hand, he argues, the conventional division of the second constituent of Religion—*Pflichtenlehre*—into the duties towards God, towards one's fellow-men and towards oneself, is not sufficiently comprehensive, inasmuch as the dietary laws are necessarily excluded! But surely those laws can, without violence, be regarded as coming within either the first or the third division. They inculcate purity or self-control; and these are duties which are clearly due from the Israelite either to himself or to his Maker or to both¹.

¹ Dr. Maybaum places a note of admiration after his statement that W. Feilchenfeld in his *Systematisches Lehrbuch der Israelitischen Religion* treats the entire Ceremonial Law, not excluding נְכִיחֵי שֶׁל נִצְרִים, under the head of Duties towards God. But to my mind there is nothing so very wonderful in this circumstance. Everything depends upon the point of view. A conservative like Feilchenfeld necessarily regards the ceremonial enactments as safeguards to personal purity, and obedience to them, therefore, as a means of showing reverence to God. This is the traditional standpoint. Feilchenfeld, indeed, heads the paragraph treating of some of these prescriptions with the title: "Gottesverehrung durch Heiligen der Sitten." Dr. Maybaum thinks that Feilchenfeld writes, not as an instructor of youth, but as a partisan. His imperfect sympathy has led him into injustice. There is much in Dr. Friedländer's book on the Jewish Religion from which we liberal Jews in England are

In dealing with this part of his subject Dr. Maybaum is far less happy than usual. He would banish philosophy from the School-house, but he perceives that the teacher must adduce proofs for his theological propositions, and he bids him turn for them to the Bible and to Jewish history generally. Thus the truth of the Divine Omnipotence is to be not only illustrated, but *established* by the account of the Creation in Genesis, or by the humiliation of Pharaoh, the Divine Spirituality by the denial of Moses' request to look upon God, and so on! This is extraordinary advice from a writer so clear-sighted and so free from dogmatic prepossessions. What he dignifies with the name of proofs are for the most part but illustrations. The account in the first chapter of Genesis is, as he tells us, to be included in the list of Bible-myths. How, then, can it be used to demonstrate the truth of the Divine Omnipotence, or indeed the truth of any proposition? The events of the Exodus he would place, of course, in a different category. But why should the teacher be constrained to limit his appeal to Jewish history? Does not the downfall of Rome, does not the uprising of England, witness as powerfully to the working of Divine Providence and to the supremacy of the moral law as the punishment of Egypt or the salvation of Israel? May not profane history play as effective and legitimate a part as the sacred story in fortifying the faith of the child? Dr. Maybaum seems, after all, to feel the force of these considerations. History, he declares, in a subsequent paragraph, offers the only real verification of the teachings of Religion. So-called philosophical evidences are out of place in the Religious school; only the proof from experience, which is furnished no less by the individual life than by secular history may, and should, be adduced. But he at once proceeds to rob this statement of much of its value by urging, as its justification,

compelled to dissent. But when we place ourselves at his standpoint we see that his teachings are germane to his purpose, and not a mere bit of polemics.

the fact that "*according to the Scriptural view the Spirit of God works in the story of the nations also.*"

We have now all but reached the end of this very useful and suggestive book. A brief concluding paragraph is devoted to some judicious observations upon the *status* and duties of those who have to impart the religious instruction. In regard to the average quality of the religious teacher Germany does not seem very much better off than England. Trained teachers are still at a premium even in that country. In the smaller congregations the religious instruction is, as a rule, entrusted to Readers and *Shochetim*, who have scarcely any acquaintance with pedagogic science; but even in the larger congregations forces are pressed into the service of religious education which are ill adapted to it. The blame rests with the parents, who set no store by an instruction which is not compulsory, with the congregational leaders, who are parsimonious when the cause demands the utmost liberality, and finally, with the secular authorities, who, charged with the duty of supervising education generally, manifest an utter indifference to the religious instruction of Jews. Even in Berlin, where the civic powers seek to do justice to the educational needs of Jewish children, one school-manager, we are told, is notoriously given to appointing Jewish teachers without concerning himself in the slightest degree with their qualifications. He holds that Bible History can be dealt with in the same way "as a bit of an ordinary German reading-book."

This is an interesting revelation, which supplies us English Jews with much food for thought. It shows, in the first place, that the German system, which ostensibly provides religious instruction for children of various denominations in the elementary schools, is not that ideal solution of the religious difficulty which some of us have fondly imagined it to be. In the next place the communal drawbacks from which our German brethren suffer are those with which we are only too familiar in this country.

We too have to deplore a want of good teaching-power. The average Anglo-Jewish teacher is doubtless a more efficient instrument than he was a couple of decades ago, particularly in London and the large provincial towns. He will be more efficient still, if the efforts of the Jewish Religious Education Board to improve his teaching capacity are seconded by the financial contributions of the community. The work recently undertaken by the Board with this object is at least as valuable as the instruction it gives to its six thousand scholars. That the vital question of providing an adequate supply of well-trained teachers for our Religious Schools and Classes should so long have remained virtually neglected, is indeed an anomaly. For years the community was content to maintain important schools without making any organized effort to staff them. The Free School in Bell Lane has long been engaged in training teachers, but the output was scarcely larger than it required for its own use, as the Education Board has discovered to its cost whenever it has had occasion to seek for new teachers. The situation, however, is improving; but it is far from being altogether satisfactory. The question of establishing a normal school for the training of Jewish teachers will, no doubt, have to be faced some day. Outside the Free School little adequate provision exists for instructing teachers in the Jewish elements of their art; the Jewish Board is, however, now endeavouring to remedy the defect. The work done in this direction by Jews' College, even with the examinations of teachers thrown in, can scarcely be deemed a worthy counterpart of that accomplished by the Berlin *Lehranstalt*. We shall have to wait a long time before a course of lectures, like those given by Dr. Maybaum, is delivered to budding Jewish teachers in this country or, if delivered, finds a sufficient number of willing hearers. One obvious drawback is to be discerned in the paucity of the candidates who offer themselves for training as Jewish teachers. The profession of a Jewish teacher is beginning to be well-nigh as unpopular

with our youth as the profession of a teacher is popular. The reason is partly a personal one. A teacher finds that an appointment under the School Board is better paid than a post in a Jewish school. Why, then, should they engage in a course of study which can only be put to practical use by submitting to pecuniary loss? Let Jewish teachers be more liberally treated, and a marked improvement in their number and quality will quickly manifest itself.

The question, then, is simply a financial one. Is the community prepared to recognize the fact, and to make the necessary sacrifice? At present, unfortunately, all the omens are adverse. Here, again, we find ourselves in a similar position to that of the Jews in Germany. There is the same imperviousness to the solemnity of religious education, the same parsimony in responding to its claims. Only unworthy minds will take comfort from the close likeness that exists between the circumstances of the two communities. If we English Jews have not the monopoly of shortcomings, the fact ought not to deter us from doing our best to rid ourselves of our share of them. A deeper conviction of the absolute necessity of religious education, and a greater willingness to bear the cost of it, are among the most pressing wants of the Anglo-Jewish community. The average English Jew needs to be more zealous in his efforts to provide religious teaching for his own children on the one hand, and for the children of the poor on the other. That the Board School Religious Classes and the Jewish denominational schools have alike to appeal periodically for the prime means of existence is no serious reflection upon the community. The discredit springs from the fact that the response to the appeals, especially in the case of the Board School Classes, is so shamefully inadequate, that with extraordinary short-sightedness the community should acquiesce in a state of things which forces within the cramping influences of the *Cheder* hundreds of children who will one day represent the religion and morality of English Judaism.

One can only hope that the proposed Association of Jewish Voluntary Schools, which is likely to constitute for the Anglo-Jewish community the most valuable results of the new Education Act, will be instrumental in remedying this crying evil. But, to end as I began, it is questionable whether this lukewarmness towards Religious Education, as a communal obligation, is not even surpassed by the growing indifference to it as a personal responsibility. That well-to-do English Jews are manifesting a declining appreciation of their duty in this respect, nearly all careful observers will, I think, agree. The Jewish Boarding School continuously draws its scholars from a lower social stratum. Not a few Jewish houses, in which the visiting religious teacher was once a familiar figure, now know him no more. There is an area which the Congregational Religion Classes fail to reach, and it is an ever-widening area. If we except the very poorest, we may fairly say that the tendency to exalt secular studies above the higher knowledge is becoming general. There is an increasing disposition to grudge the time required for religious teaching as so much time taken not merely from the preparation of school-tasks, but even from physical training. Subjects like Hebrew and even Religion have now to compete for favour with gymnastics and dancing, and are too often worsted in the encounter. To say that this state of things is only a symptom of that general decline of religious enthusiasm which is said to be the note of the age, is to label, rather than to explain it. Nor can any remedy for it be suggested short of that complete spiritual revival which will compel the English Jew to restore the things that make for the true life to their rightful position, and which will give him back his fast-vanishing reverence for the beauty of his creed and the dignity of his mission.

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